1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
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A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives.

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter.

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever.

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to wolves and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe.

A menstruating woman was called niniitixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation.

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child.

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551 Names were given to children very soon after birth. Names were frequently changed and given away. A man would receive his father's name
553 from the latter, or would take it after his death. If a child were sickly, a relative, such as a grandfather, sometimes gave him another name. A sick person sometimes also took a new name in order to recover. Renowned warriors sometimes gave away their names to young men. They might retain the same name for themselves, or take a new one. One very aged man gave away his name to a young man, telling him, "I give you my name in order that you may have as long a life as I." This was done without the occasion or accompaniment of a ceremony.

There seems to have been no prohibition against mentioning the name of the dead, nor even any reluctance on the matter. Some people, however, were ashamed to speak their own names.

551 Twins, called niiçan, were named, if boys, respectively Kaaen and Niiça[n].
845 The latter name, however, was not always used, an ordinary name being given instead. Girl twins were not called by these names.

302 The hair was formerly worn in braids, as at present customary among the Plains tribes, but also erect over the forehead. The women wore their
[765] hair either in braids or sometimes loose. In mourning, the hair, especially of the women, was cut about halfway across the cheek.

304 Ear-piercing, which among the Arapaho is performed on ceremonial occasions, and is itself accompanied with ceremony and giving of presents, was said among the Gros Ventre to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions. A woman or any one else does the piercing.

857 Boys who were herding horses sometimes took off their clothes and daubed themselves with mud until they were unrecognizable. They painted
673 their horses, and made shields of willow. Then they came to the camp,
868 mounted or on foot, to steal meat. Approaching the camp like a war-party, they would select the best meat hanging outdoors, charge on it, take it, and run. The old men and women and children chased them with clubs, but of course without success. The boys would go back to where they were herding, and have a feast.

576 The Gros Ventre say that both hand-shaking and kissing are aboriginal with them.

GAMES.

524 A common cup-and-ball game called tsöötskuutja[n] ("throw in") consisted of four hollow deer or antelope leg bones, each about two inches long, attached to a string passing through them, at the end of which there was a needle eight or ten inches long. This game appears to be identical with

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Doctors were paid a horse or more for their services. Sometimes several, in turn, doctored a patient, each one blaming those that had failed before. Often they laid the sickness to spirits, or to other doctors. This last occurred especially if in their sucking they extracted human finger-nails or similar objects. In such a case the doctor got his patient to sleep. The patient might then in his dream see the person that had made him sick, and on awaking would denounce him. If the sick man died, his relatives might kill the doctor whom he had named as the cause of his sickness.

There were not so many women doctors as men. They appear not to have gone out to the mountains with the intention of acquiring supernatural power, but to have received guardian spirits when they were away from the camp, mourning.

The jugular and femoral arteries and the aorta were called ts'niinotanoudj[1] ("having no ears"), because, when severed, they did not heed any remedies.

In order to save the life of a sick relative, the joint of the little finger was sometimes cut off in sacrifice to the sun.

There were some medicine-men who, having had their fingers tied, then had their knees fastened together and their hands secured behind their back. After this they were wrapped in a robe and the robe was wound about with a rope. Then such a medicine-man called his spirit. When it appeared, he was loosened instantaneously, and the robe and the rope were thrown at the man that tied him.

Fig. 30 (50 1937). Doctor's Charm. Length, 22 cm.

A charm used by a doctor is shown in Fig. 30. It consists of a deer-tail with beaded base, and of two black feathers and a bunch of down feathers. All parts of the object are reddened. This piece was used to brush patients. At other times during the doctoring it was worn on the medicine-man's clothing.

A man unsuccessful in winning a woman's love sometimes fasted on a

1; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
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796 fork is upright, the young men all compete, trying to raise their rafters into position in the centre fork and in a fork at the periphery, before the others. After the tree has been raised, or possibly before, the young men go out, apparently by age-companies, to cut willows to form the walls of the lodge. More recently the star-dancers and war-dancers have done this, those of each company taking the wives of the men of the other company on their horses behind them. As they go, they shoot up in the air, and when in the timber each man cuts a willow-branch. They return holding the branches and singing, ride around the lodge, and then deposit them. After the outside rafter-poles of the lodge have been tied fast in the forks, these branches are leaned in position, forming an enclosure of the lodge.

The centre fork has a buffalo-tail attached to it. A bundle of brush, called a "nest," is also fastened in the fork. A lightning symbol is made on the western side of the tree down to the ground. Inside the lodge a low screen, said to be about waist high, is erected at the western end, opposite the entrance. Behind this is the pledger of the dance. In front of the screen is a painted buffalo-skull. Two sticks of cherry-wood, one red and one black, stand on each side of the skull. A wheel or ceremonial hoop made of a stick bent in a circle, wrapped with skin, and with feathers attached, is hung on one of these sticks. Just as clothing is hung at the ends of the horizontal rafters of the lodge, or possibly on the centre fork itself, as an offering to the sun, objects are said to be hung on this brush screen at the western end of the lodge.

[197] Apparently the general course of the main portion of the dance, which follows the erection of the lodge, is similar to that of the Arapaho sun-dance, though there are certain features entirely without parallel among the Arapaho. The pledger and the other dancers neither eat nor drink during the ceremony. Women join in the fasting, but do not dance. The dancers stand whistling, and looking up at the "nest" in the tree.

796 The self-torture characterizing the sun-dance among most tribes is found
● 364 with the Gros Ventre in its usual form. Four knotted thongs hang from the
785 centre fork. Two sticks are passed under the skin of the dancers' breasts, one on each side, to which the thongs are fastened. The dancers try to tear the sticks out of their skin. Some whose skin is tough do not succeed. In that case a medicine-man comes to them and makes them unconscious of pain, so that they break loose easily. When they have fallen, he restores them to consciousness. One after the other, the dancers go through this ordeal. While the dancers are thus tied to the tree, they move back and forth, apparently dancing. This is called niina^{n}tsõia^{n}. Some dancers also fasten shields in a similar way to the skin of their back, and pull these out. Others are attached by the breast to a post located outside of the dancing-

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
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lodge. Other men go up into the hills near the camp, where they are fastened to a post, and fast from sunrise to sunset. In the evening their ceremonial "grandfather" comes and cuts them loose. Young men who want to meet with success in war pierce the skin over their shoulder-blade, and, having inserted sticks, hang two guns to these on each side. Sometimes a crooked-hoofed horse is fastened to the sticks. Thereupon they go about outside of the camp-circle, crying constantly, hoping that some supernatural being will pity them. Still others tie four or five buffalo-skulls in a row, which they fasten in the same way to their backs. They also go around the camp-circle.

If it is thought possible that the enemy may be near at the time of the dance, a man brings a filled pipe to the pledger of the dance and offers it to him, asking about the enemy. The pledger takes out his medicine-bag, which is the skin of the animal he saw in his vision, incenses it, and performs the acts which this guardian animal commanded. Every one is quiet, and the fire is put out so that the lodge is completely dark. The pledger blows his whistle, and the people sing for him as loudly as they can. He makes motions around his head with his medicine, thereby asking his guardian spirit to enable him to see supernaturally. He continues his motions until he is able to see the enemy. Thereupon he sits down. After this, another man offers him a pipe, saying, "We wish you to tell us what you have seen. Therefore take this pipe and smoke it." After he has smoked, the pledger tells the people how many people he has seen, and where they are. He says, "I saw so many buffalo-bulls (men). They are coming from there. Take charcoal for successful battle" (black being the paint of victory).

The dancers also have the power to see the enemy. If, as they look at the "nest" day and night, they see legs hanging down, or a headless body in the tree, it is the sign that an enemy will be killed by the tribe. If, on the other hand, they see blood on the poles overhead or running down the central tree, a member of the tribe will be killed. Sometimes they see a man whom they can recognize as a member of the tribe, black as coal and very thin, hanging from the poles above them. Then he will die soon.

Each day certain men, who seem to be young men, are selected, and their names called out. These men dress as if for war. When they enter, it seems that they sit in a row at the left of the entrance. The bravest of them are then selected, and taken to the back of the lodge, where a bed and head-rest have been prepared, on which they sit. One of these men counts a coup, and picking up a stick puts it into the fire. One after another they do this until a large fire is blazing. These men are called ts00taxwuhuu ("inside dancers"). Thereupon two old men, going to the centre of the lodge and conferring in whispers, select six or eight warriors. As soon as these

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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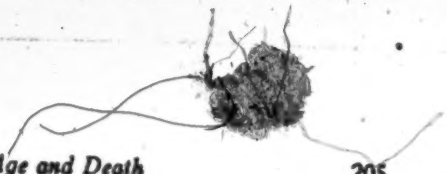
nothing the person can do about it. One of Singer's friends was called " Matter in the Ear " and another " Ugly or Homely." Another woman harped so much on an event which took place at Turtle River, that " Turtle River " became the name by which she was known, and most people forgot that her actual name was " Spotted Calf."

The piercing of the ears may be done at the same time as the naming, as apparently was done in the case of Coming Daylight, or might be done shortly thereafter. Singer, for instance, was named by Sitting High, but her grandmother on a different occasion pierced her ears. The parents might pay someone to do this, or a relative might volunteer. The sooner the ear-piercing is done the better, because the older the child is the more it may hurt. Singer said: " That ear-piercing goes either through a dream or through war deeds." In the former case, the dream is told and then the ears are pierced. In the latter case the person must relate a war story: " This is what I have done. . . ." The story has to be a true one concerning an incident wherein the enemy did not retaliate so the ears will heal up without any trouble.[13] The actual procedure, regardless of whether there is much formality or not, is as follows. An awl is used to pierce the ear and into the hole is inserted either a small splinter of rose-wood sharpened to a pin-point, or a porcupine quill. Whichever is used, it is greased before inserting and is left in until it falls out when the ear is healed. At this time is then inserted a small ring merely to keep the hole open. Fancy earrings are not worn by small children. Formerly boys' ears were pierced as well as girls'. The number of holes in each ear seems more or less arbitrary, but all are made on the same occasion. Coming Daylight has one in each ear; Singer has two; Coming Daylight's eldest son has three. The custom is now dying out as the present generation of mothers does not believe in it. Coming Daylight wanted to pierce the ears of her great-granddaughter but the child's mother said: " No. You will hurt her."

[13] Kroeber, 1908, p. 182 states that ear-piercing was said to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions.



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until someone went after them and talked to them and persuaded them to eat and drink some water.

The most extravagant expressions of grief were expected on the part of close relatives of men killed at war. It was under such circumstances that the mourners tore off their clothes and gashed their arms and legs. The blood was not washed off and the wounds were allowed to fester, often leaving ugly scars. It was maintained that in mourning the Gros Ventres did not cut off fingers,—that was done only in fulfilment of a vow. [304]

If a brave young man were killed by the enemy, his parents went even further in the expression of their grief, and sometimes had to be restrained from committing suicide. The father could show additional sorrow by cutting the manes and tails of his son's horses, which he then led about as he wandered on the hills for four days and nights, crying and mourning. The following case illustrates the behavior of an elder brother in mourning for a younger one, but may be somewhat exceptional in that the former felt responsible for the latter's death. [962]

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"Little Man, also known as Deafie, was on his way home with his younger brother. They had been on a friendly visit to the Crow. There were others in the party and one evening while they were camped, the younger brother had a dream. The next morning he told them: 'I had a bad dream. I dreamed I got killed.' One of the older men said: 'All right. We will stop here awhile so we can make a sweat-lodge and we will smudge.' (That is what they did when they wanted to prevent something bad from happening.) But Little Man told them that, although the rest of them might believe in dreams, he did not, and he insisted that they move on. The old man couldn't say anything more. As they were going along that same day, Little Man was scouting ahead and sighted the enemy. The Gros Ventre party separated, Little Man going with one group, his brother with the other. The brother happened to go right into the midst of the Assiniboine and was killed. The others heard the shots, but when they got there, Little Man found his brother lying dead. He then tore off all his clothes and would have committed suicide by dashing singlehanded after the enemy had not his brother-in-law grabbed him and held him back. When they got home, Little Man felt so badly that he cut off his beautiful

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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keeper (and probably the co-keeper too) could not cut his hair, but had to wear it tangled and disheveled.

The keeper and co-keeper were not permitted to bathe and swim in the creeks,—this in contrast to the Gros Ventre custom of daily early morning bathing and swimming by both sexes the year round when not prevented by ice, as a cleansing, body-hardening and recreative practice. In fact, the two were not allowed to wash even their hands and face with water, but, according to The Boy, had to use instead fat, grease or oil, and to wipe them with the same muskrat skin they used in face painting.

The keeper could not draw blood on his own person by cutting, as was done by others in the sweat lodge rite, in mourning, and on other occasions.

The keeper and co-keeper were not supposed to cry or to cut their hair in case of the death of a relative, nor to go where any one lay dead, nor to have anything at all to do with a corpse. In particular they were not allowed to give clothes, at least their own, to put on a dead person. It was a breach of this last prohibition, in fact, that resulted in Lame Bull's lameness, and his subsequent sobriquet, Lame Bull, his proper name being Under Bull.[4]

The keeper and co-keeper could not gamble or be gambled with. If the keeper nevertheless did so and won, he won not only the wager, but also the life of his opponent. The latter would meet with some fatality unless the keeper agreed to avert the evil by performing the proper rite over him. The keeper would direct the man to build a sweat-lodge and would enter it with him. The man would fumigate himself and inhale the smudge. The keeper would rub the man all over from head to feet with sage.

The keeper was not allowed just to throw off his saddle or blankets onto the ground but had to take good care of them.

According to Coming Daylight, a keeper during his term of office "could not sing the songs he was supposed to sing," but we secured no clarification of this statement. The reference may be to songs previously gotten in quests for supernatural power.

In addition to the foregoing more or less restrictive or "ascetic" observances that served to set the keeper and co-keeper apart from

[4] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 201.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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upward or downward but to the hill, with a ritual gesture and would make his request direct to the one or ones inhabiting the hill or mountain top and tell this one or these ones what [power] he actually wanted."

In all the above the quester was following the general ritual and social Gros Ventre pattern for making requests. Such was the ritual pattern in prayer with a pipe. And whenever a pipe was offered to a fellow-tribesman it was offered with the stem toward him. The offering of a pipe to another when asking something of him was an "emphatic way of pleading." Thomas Main here remarked: "If I wanted to borrow money of another and were afraid my request would not be granted, I might offer him a pipe when asking for the loan and so reinforce my request."

Bull Lodge, when seeking power on a butte, made offerings of material goods and of the first joint of his left little finger. Little Man made offerings of a bit or bits of his flesh.

While up on the mountains the quester, alone and praying and concentrating his thoughts on his quest, would fast, neither eating or drinking, and would walk around crying, shedding real tears. He, or the man who had first accompanied him to the spot and then left him, would make a rude sleeping place of rocks and twigs and branches. This sort of "nest" was called his "call-for-power lodge." When the quester got weak or fatigued or sleepy, he would lie down in this "nest" and doze or sleep. Al Chandler stated: "Their [the quester's] sleep is not sound, any little thing wakens them. They are expecting something all the time and they look for it." Usually power was given during such sleep, although in some instances when the quester was wide awake. The power-giving being would speak to the quester and, usually at least, appear to him.

Sometimes a quester would be told by the being whose "house" was the mountain on which the man was questing: "Here is the kind of power I have. This is all I have. That other one [being] has the kind of power you wish. Go over there." And the being would name some other butte or mountain. Thus, for instance, a man going to a given mountain to seek wealth or war power might be offered doctoring power, and if he did not take this

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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after a certain period of probation. He, however, broke the rule and doctored before his time was up. A night or so after he had doctored a spider came out of his ears and a thunder-rock out of his mouth, and so he lost his doctoring power.

Occasionally in connection with the power quest the right would be given to the quester to paint his lodge in a particular manner.[13] Among the Gros Ventre such sacred or holy painted lodges were relatively rare and were thought of very highly. We recorded one song (No. 88), a wordless one, which belonged with Bull Lodge's sacred lodge. Bull Lodge had been "invited" to quest for power at Baldy Butte, the highest peak in the Bear Paws. The being who gave him other powers also bestowed upon him his own lodge, with instructions how to paint it and the song to sing while it was being painted. Coming Daylight's father had a sacred lodge around the bottom of which were painted the figures of men, each figure the same and each with a feather in the head. The upper part was painted red. "At the tip of the ears of the lodge were things hanging, and feathers in back. The back part had a cross (morning star) and the sun."[14]

What has been said in the preceding pages about the circumstances of Gros Ventre quest may be illustrated by the following account given by Al Chandler of that of Little Man, his adoptive father:

"When Little Man first went out to seek power, the old medicine man (his tutor in the matter) told him: 'I am going with you.' So when they got out in the hills, maybe a whole day's travel to this place where he wanted to go, this old man asked Little Man where he wanted to go to fast and Little Man chose a place not very far away. So they went together. This old man cut his (Little Man's) flesh, took a pinch,—(some did it 3, 6, or 9 pinches), and prayed each time he cut a bit of flesh off. He told Little Man: 'Nobody is going to come after you until your time is up. If I tell you three days, nobody is coming after you until this time is up. In the meantime use your whole heart and don't get

[13] There was a distinction between the sacred painted lodges and the lodges painted with war deeds. Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 68, 102.

[14] For illustrations of sacred painted lodges, see Plate 4.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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in the operator. It was resorted to for various ailments; tuberculosis, dizziness and "logginess" were specifically mentioned by our informants. "If the ailment were located somewhere above the waist the patient was bled at the elbow joint on the upper surface of the arm; if somewhere below the waist, on top of the instep." One arm might be opened in spring, the other in the fall. In the procedure described by the Boy, before the incision was made, the patient would put his hand on the ground and hold his arm rather rigid, while the operator squeezed and at the same time rubbed down the upper arm until the blood vessel at the bend of the arm bulged. In a slightly different procedure described by Singer, the patient's upper arm was tied very tight and "the blood was worked down;" then the large blood vessel on the upper side of the elbow joint was pierced with a very sharp chip off an "onyx stone,"* and the blood would spurt out; when the patient was sufficiently bled, a bit of buffalo fur was scorched, put over the incision, and kept in place without any dressing. By bedtime everything would be "okay."

Certain individuals, such as Thick's wife, and Woman Chief, were more skillful than others at bloodletting. On one occasion Singer's husband said to her: "Come on now. I want you to bleed me." She started to do so but "just had to yell," at which he said: "Why anyone would think that it was you who were going to bleed." Coming Daylight was still more reluctant to perform the operation. "In fact, I could never do it," she said, "because I cannot stand the sight of blood."

A tattoo-like surgical treatment was described by Coming Daylight, although Gros Ventres did not practice decorative tattooing. "For a while," she said, "it seemed like my hand would come unjointed and I could not use it very well. They took a bunch of needles and pierced my hand where it was hurting me. They told me: 'Now if you don't eat anything fried, it won't turn blue.' After piercing my hand they put some root on it, and it never got sore." She added: "They do that to the head, too."

Lancing of the gums of children when teething, elsewhere de-

* Singer showed the stone she owned from which the chip is struck. It was a shiny black one, but we did not identify it.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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singed off at a fire, and the insides taken out without skinning the animal; then it was quartered up and boiled.

In addition, Charles Buckman stated: "If a party went out to war and met the enemy, before the actual fighting began a man might promise to give grub and a feast to old people, and as part of the feast there had to be a dog,—a pup, of any color. After the party got back home [at the feast, before eating] four pieces of the dog meat were taken and held up and then set on [in] the ground, one each to the north, east, south and west. The pieces were held up as offered to God—in thanksgiving and as a prayer for future favors. Then the young man served the grub to the old people. Before eating they would say, 'O God, this young man has fulfilled the promise he made to you,' and they would pray for him."

What we may call, for want of a better name, sacrifices of person or somatic sacrifices, took three main forms: offerings of flesh, of finger joints, and of self-inflicted suffering and/or privation. Each of the first two is a sacrifice in the strict sense of the term; the third, in the broader sense. The gashing of arms, legs or face as a mourning custom was quite distinct in the Gros Ventre mind from the above flesh offering: it expressed sorrow, it was not in any sense a sacrifice or offering to the deceased. No sacrifices at all were connected with mourning. Nor were finger joints ever cut off as a mourning observance.[8]

In most instances recorded by us, these somatic sacrifices were made in fulfillment of vows for the cure or safety of a close relative of the vower,—as, it may be recalled, was the case with self-torturers in the Sacrifice Dance. There were exceptions however: in their respective quests for power, Bull Lodge cut off a finger joint, and Little Man, Al Chandler's adopted father, cut off bits of flesh; the other Little Man, Coming Daylight's husband, when suffering from hemorrhages and pains around the heart was told in dream that he would get well if he underwent solitary self-torture.

Women as well as men would make offerings of their flesh and finger joints. To judge from the records we obtained, the finger joint sacrifice was more frequently made by women than by men,

[8] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 205.

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782 785 304 the flesh sacrifice with about equal frequency by the two sexes. Ordinarily only a little of the woman's flesh was cut, small bits, as against the large bits or strips not infrequently cut from the man. Only men underwent solitary self-torture out in the hills.

With these generalizations on somatic sacrifices covered, we shall now take up specific features of the flesh, finger and self-torture sacrifices in order.

In the early archaic times Ni:hɔhat, as we have seen, gave detailed instructions on cutting off bits of flesh when explaining about the Flat Pipe sweat-lodge.

The rite was described by The Boy (Thick present and concurring) and, with some differences, by Singer, as follows:

The Boy (and Thick). "The cutting off of bits of flesh was a rite all to itself. A round hole was made in the ground for the heated rocks; a common sweat-lodge was erected; a mound was made of the dirt excavated to make the hole; a buffalo skull was put on the mound; and a pole was put up for offerings. . . . The one to be cut would get as an operator someone who had gone through the rite himself. . . . The cut off flesh was offered to the Supreme Being. . . . Usually the rite was undergone so that some sick person who was near and dear to the undergoer would get well. . . . The skin was not pierced but a piece of green branch was split in two, and the two pieces were pressed hard, parallel and not quite touching each other, on the skin making it rise up, and these raised strips were then cut off. . . . One of my grandfathers was all cut up, with two half circles on his chest, one half circle on the outer side of each shoulder, a double row of cuts—not little bits, but strips cut right down—on both his upper arms and forearms and legs from hip to ankle. All these cuts were made on a single occasion. It was thought he would die of this sacrifice but he did not. . . . I myself had four bits of flesh cut from my arm, and others [farther] up my arm. [He here bared his arm and showed the scars: they were not crescent shaped.] The first cutting was done when I was a child. I was told to look away when it was being done. Sometimes children would run away and hide when told it was to be done to them. . . . Only three or four years ago [this would be about 1935-36] an old man so cut off

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a young man's skin back of Thomas Main's house." (The cut off pieces of skin were, as at the Sacrifice Lodge, placed on the buffalo skull, "as an offering of the [person's] very body.") 782 785 304

Singer. "For cutting offerings of flesh from the arms they usually tried to get the same doctor who cut off my finger joint (see infra). He would take the flesh, put a needle through it and cut the flesh off. . . . He would then put the cut-off flesh in one of the bags from around the buffalo or cow heart which were used to carry water, and would hang it up or bury it. Women could not do the flesh cutting for themselves; they had to have a man doctor to do it. You promise so to torture yourself for some reason such as the wish to save the life of your sister or brother or other relative. For instance, if some young fellows were going off on a war party, the sisters would get out and make some such promise as: 'I will give part of my flesh or my finger if my brother comes back a great warrior.' It was great to have somebody [some relative] come back a hero, a brave man, or, as they called it, a big chief. . . . A wife could do this for her husband but usually it was a sister who thought that much of her brother. . . .

"I have a scar on my left upper arm [which she showed]. I had made this promise for the recovery of one of my daughters who was ill. A sick person is doctored, but such a promise is made as a last resort. Lame Bull told me they were going to make a big cut, like the ones they made on men. The cutting was done in a sweat-lodge where they all sat and prayed. They blackened the spot on my arm with charcoal,[10] then clipped the flesh off and held it up to the sun and said: 'This is what we offered you.' He cut me in four places on each arm. My husband was mad because it was too much. The one place on my left arm where the scar is was cut deeper than the others. After I made that promise I had the cutting done right away. [Mary Ereaux, our interpreter, here interrupted: "Goodness, you might just as well have done like the Sacrifice Dancers. You tortured yourself just as badly."] I held myself in but they certainly hurt me. They did not put anything on the wounds, only the charcoal beforehand. People try to [191]

[10] Blackening sacrifices was a common (perhaps *the* regular) Gros Ventre procedure.

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785 take anything like that very patiently" ["Like our Lord being
304 crucified," Mary Ereaux commented].

Very much the same procedure as regards the sweat-lodge, buffalo skull and so forth was ordinarily followed when a finger joint was amputated. The cut-off joint was offered commonly to the sun, or to the Supreme Being. The operation regularly took place inside a sweat-lodge. "A joint from any finger could be offered up, but usually it was the first joint of the little finger of the left hand. The offerer would put his or her finger on a log or stone; the operator, someone skilled in the matter, would then place a knife on the joint and hit the knife with something heavy. [752] Sage was put on the wound, to stanch the flow of blood and help healing. Children in their play, it may be added, would in make-believe cut off little fingers, apply sage and so forth.

The finger amputation complex may be illustrated by Singer's experience:

"My infant daughter [one of her three children by Iron Bucket] had been ill. I sacrificed [in a delayed fulfillment of her vow] the end joint of the little finger of my left hand. . . . I said: 'I give you this. This is what I sacrifice to save my child's life.' This I said to the sun which is God's work, His property like. . . . I held the baby and my husband prayed: 'Sun, she has given you her finger so our child's life will be saved.' . . .

"The rite was private, not a big ceremony. We went out of the lodge and the sun was about half way up and he [apparently the operator] held up my whole left hand and said: 'Now, Passing or Traveling Man, this is what she is going to give you.' There was just one old man who cut off fingers. They claimed he had [this power from] a dream. . . . He was the father of Dwarf; Dwarf died just recently.

"They had me lie face down and the others held me so I would not move. The old man [Dwarf's father] . . . told me to relax, . . . felt around, found the joint, put my finger over the lodge pole and chopped it [the end joint only] off. I did not see it but I heard when he hit the lodge pole. But there was no pain. Then they let me sit up.

"The old man said: 'Do you want it to bleed, or shall I close

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it up right away?' My husband said, 'Let it bleed,' because he was afraid it would be sore if it didn't bleed. So when the old man thought it had bled enough, he chewed some big-leaf sage, made a poultice, and put it on my finger (and/or "sprinkled powdered root on my finger," she added later). It healed quickly and never troubled me. . . . We had to give the old man something for doing that. . . . My daughter lived to be a young woman."

Self-torture out on the hills,—"sacrifice alone on hills," as it was called,—had much in common with self-torture at the Sacrifice Dance. The chief difference was that, unlike the Sacrifice Dance torture rite, it was done in solitude. The self-torturer had to have a ritual grandfather, a man who himself had previously undergone this solitary self-torture—this in contrast to flesh and finger cutting in which there were no ritual grandfathers. The "grandfather-grandson" relationship so contracted persisted after the rite was over. Coming Daylight and The Boy were in agreement that the solitary self-torture was a more severe ordeal than self-torture at the Sacrifice Dance.

Those mentioned by our informants as having gone through "sacrifice alone on the hills" were: Stiffarm; Running Crow (Stiffarm as his "grandfather" for this rite); Coming Daylight's husband Little Man (Running Crow as his "grandfather"); her cousin White Skunk, son of Crow Bull; The Boy's brother; Jim Shortman; and perhaps Sits-in-the-Middle. On Stiffarm's, Running Crow's, and Sits-in-the-Middle's experience we obtained no details; on White Skunk's, no details beyond the fact that he underwent it "because my [Coming Daylight's] son was sick at the mission school: that son died anyway," and that he did "right on this hill here [at Hays]." The detailed accounts of Little Man's experience as narrated by Coming Daylight, of The Boy's brother's as narrated by The Boy, and of Jim Shortman's as narrated by himself, to be given now, will help to fill out the generalized picture of the rite in the preceding paragraph.

Coming Daylight's account of Little Man's "sacrifice alone on the hills," given in separate fragments on four different days, is here presented just as she gave it.

"My husband Little Man [Deafie] went out to the hills. When

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anyone so goes to be tortured someone else goes along. It was awful when they so went to pray and cry and sacrifice themselves. Running Crow went with Little Man, as the latter's grandfather, to pierce his breast and insert the skewers whereby he was attached to the pole by a thong. [After that was done] Running Crow gave Little Man a push and Little Man danced round and round the pole. Running Crow and Stiffarm, who went out with him [just as helper, not as grandfather], left Little Man, as was customary, alone. Then sometime during the day the two returned and gave Little Man a smoke, but the latter did not eat or drink anything. He would be hungry and thirsty and would run around without even moccasins on his feet. It is an awful sacrifice. He would dance until the skewer pulled out of his flesh. Then he would be tired and would sleep and dream.

"Little Man went through this rite on account of a dream. He had been sick [heart pains and hemorrhages] and had dreamed he was going through the rite, and in consequence did later actually carry it out. He carried it out at Chinook where we were all living at the time. During the rite his mother sang war songs in her camp.

"Little Man had not tortured himself in any big celebration [Sacrifice Dance]. He did this only alone on the hills. It is hardest this latter way. It takes longer to break off [for the skewer to tear through the flesh] in the heat [sic]. It is awfully hot out in the hills and the self-torturer goes barefoot, without moccasins. He dances west to east, counter clockwise, from sun up to sun down. It is not so hot in the lodge at the big celebrations [Sacrifice Dances]. It is a greater thing to do it alone.

"The time my husband, Little Man, did this I too was away on the hills. I pitied my old man [husband] and did not eat. I came home in the evening to cook for him. We always help a relative when he fasts like that. My husband's mother and sister were at home together with another woman relative, Ed Blackbird's wife."

After Little Man's self-torture was over, he was told in a dream the exact kind of leaf (or root) to use for curing his hemorrhages and just where it was to be found, Coming Daylight was able to find it, and Little Man was cured.

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The Boy's narrative of his older brother's experience gives insight into the brother's feelings during the ordeal as well as detailed information on the rite itself. His brother had undergone self-torture once at a Sacrifice Dance and twice alone on a hill. The occasion of one of the two solitary rites was the following. Lame Bull had adopted a young boy who grew up as one of the family and proved himself worthy. The adopted boy and The Boy's older brother, both now dead, were sort of favorite sons of Lame Bull. The adopted son suddenly became mentally unbalanced. It was for his cure that The Boy's older brother vowed solitary self-torture. After the fulfillment of the vow the adopted son recovered.

The older brother, before the solitary rite, gave a pipe to a man to pray with and to announce out loud the coming rite and the name of the "grandfather" selected. At the end of the prayer the announcer released the pipe to the ritual grandfather who then took charge of the rite, piercing the vower and later cutting him loose.

The skewer punctures were made by first plunging a big awl into the skin on the side of the chest, the vower lying on his back. Then with the awl the skin was raised up, and a knife plunged point first right through the skin at right angles to the awl,—making in all three perforations of the skin, one by the awl and two by the knife point. Then the knife was withdrawn, the stick or skewer was pushed through at once while the holes were fresh, and finally the awl was withdrawn. One end, slashed, of a buckskin thong was put over the two projecting ends of the skewer, and the other end attached to the top of the pole anchored on the hill or knoll.

With the thongs so attached to the pole and the skewers [in the vower's chest, right and left side], the vower walked and ran, from sunrise to sunset, clockwise, starting at the south and ending there, then counter-clockwise, all through the day. He would go around so often that he would make a trail there.

The brother's feelings, as described by him to The Boy, are here given in The Boy's words:

"Out on the hill was the most severe [as compared with the Sacrifice Dance] for the reason that he had to do it all alone. From time to time he would rest, exhausted and crying. [When going]

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he would stretch himself good and tight [the thongs taut, his body weight pulling on them]. When he rested and wanted to relax and let the thongs go slack, the pain was worse than when they were taut. The skin over the skewer would dry up (and would work toward the living skin). . . . At sundown my brother's 'grandfather' came to him, and the toughest part of all occurred. My brother had not during the day tried to break loose [by body pull to make the skewer sever the skin], as at the Sacrifice Dance, for his 'grandfather' was to cut his skin loose. My brother all but died when he was cut loose. It was as if his heart was being cut. And at night, after both the Sacrifice Dance and the solitary ordeal, the pain was so intense, as if there were two red hot coals there [where the flesh was cut], that he could not sleep."

Jim Shortman (died 1948), probably the last Gros Ventre living who had gone through the solitary self-torture rite, gave the following account of his experience:

"The sticks [skewers for thongs] were about three inches long. (Here Jim undid his shirt to show the scars which were still visible on his chest.) My helper [ritual grandfather] was Running Crow. He was the man who fixed me up, pierced my flesh and fastened the thongs. My self-torture alone took place on a hill way out.

"My first struggle and ordeal in all that I was to do was to follow a command by Running Crow for me to go to the stream and break off a quaking aspen tree, but not to cut it with knife or axe,—to break it off in some way and bring to where I was going to do the fasting. So I went and twisted and worked and wore the ground just smooth around the tree with my efforts, and finally I got it down and twisted it off. I put a rope around it and dragged it to the scene of the fasting, and I had to accomplish this before sun-up of that day.

"So Running Crow went with me on my way to the scene of the fasting, which was a little west of where I and Paul Shortman now live. Just to the right of it is a little ridge. That is where I did it. The reason I vowed to do this was because my mother was at the point of death. She was very sick and I carried out my vow and she got well.

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"Paddy Skinner came along to help Running Crow dig a hole and fix in it the pole I had twisted off and tamp it in the ground securely. After they put up that pole or tree, Running Crow tied all of my offerings up there on top and also fastened the rope that was to be secured to the sticks in my chest.

"After this tree was made secure in the ground, Running Crow told me to take my clothes off, which I did, and he made a paste of white clay and painted my body with it. So these two men told me to lie down on my back and face my head towards the rising sun. Then they took a knife, and a big needle in the other hand, and lifted the skin on my upper arm and cut off seven pieces of my skin. Then they did that to my other arm. This made fourteen pieces in all. They put these pieces they had cut off at the foot of this tree. Then they cut off seven more pieces on the outside of each of my thighs, and by that time it began to hurt.

"Then last they cut my chest, the right side first. They pierced me there with the blade of a pocket knife and pushed the stick [skewer] in as soon as he released the blade. Then they repeated this on my left side. They told me to stand up so they fastened the thongs onto these sticks. Running Crow did that.

"Then after these things were securely fastened, Running Crow put the palm of his hand on my chest and pushed me four times to make the ropes tight. He stepped to my right side and pushed me four times too, and at the same time he told me: 'Now you begin your fasting and your actual performance of your vow and you must begin by crying.' And I did all that. And Running Crow told me: 'Go around this pole, round and round clockwise, and when you get tired you can lie down or sit down anyway you find restful, but always keep the ropes tight and do not loosen them, much less take them off.'

"Finally I got tired and I thought I would lie down and rest, and I did lie down but I did not rest well. In fact it seemed to be worse. Even the wind making the thongs sway hurt me. I had started out without eating or drinking anything. I was fasting. I had a terrible ordeal, to say the least, but I found that when I pulled tight [pulled the body away from the pole and kept the thongs taut] I suffered less.

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"Just before the sun went down that day, all at once I felt something touching me on my left side. It was Running Crow and the other man who stopped me. This meant that my fasting and chastizing myself were about over.

"They took off those thongs and told me to lie down in the same position that they had told me to lie in at the beginning. That is when I suffered the most. They did not take the sticks out, but just cut those thongs off and it seemed to me as if they were cutting my heart. Those fellows took those pieces that my skin was still clinging to and buried them at the foot of the post. And that is my experience. They told me to put on my clothes and I did so. I did not experience or perceive anything out of the ordinary. I just suffered. That is all.

"After I put on my clothes I found out that the skin of my feet was worn off and blistered and sore, and they sure hurt me. And to add to my aches, on the soles of my feet I was awfully sore the next morning and couldn't walk. And that is the end of my experience."

Sweat-Bath

In Gros Ventre ritual, sweating and sacrificing were quite closely associated. Invitations to sweat extended to the Supreme Being and other beings in certain sweat-lodge rites,[11] such as those connected with the Flat and Feathered Pipe ceremonies, were of the nature of gifts or offerings, and hence sacrifices in the broader sense of the term. Then, too, the sweat-lodge and sweat-bath were a chosen medium for making offerings or consummating the sacrificial rite: the pole erected in front of the sweat-lodge and the buffalo skull on the adjacent mound were intended particularly for the attachment to and disposition of respectively sacrificial objects,—offerings of robes, bits of flesh, and so forth. Furthermore, the sweat-lodge was a preferred place in which to make sacrifices of flesh and of finger joints.

On other occasions too sweat-lodge and sacrifice went together. For instance, a man whose son had been killed by the enemy might

[11] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 274-75, gives an account of sweating and mentions that "Above-white-man" was called first.

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"My experience was by dreaming. One time before I was married—I must have been about eight years old—I was sleeping in a big lodge and a 'person' came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicines on his back. He came to me on four successive nights and laid out these medicines and told me what each was for. On the third of these nights there was a man lying there—he was just skin and bones. The 'person' who had awakened me told me: 'You could take all these medicines and you could cure people like that one lying there' [i.e., a person in the last extremity]. In my dream I would do everything he told me, manipulate my hands to draw out the sickness, and do everything. But I didn't want that power and would tell him so. Each morning too I would relate to my grandmother exactly what had happened in the night but she would try to hush me up, telling me: 'Don't say anything; don't tell anyone. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I didn't want that power. I didn't like it because when medicine people suck on the weak part of the sick person they have to swallow what they extract. I had decided I would rather be quiet and not do anything like that, or sacrifice my flesh, or things of that kind. Perhaps if it had come later I might have taken that power and become great."

Nevertheless when later in life she had other dreams indicating supernatural power, she likewise refused. She explained in regard to one of these experiences, for instance: "The one who awakened me this time had told me to face the rising sun and was showing me how to make a smudge from the moss that grows close on logs; but I told him. 'No. I would rather not have it.' Those who have power die too soon."

Incidentally, still in connection with curing, bleeding was an operation which was performed purely as a natural remedy for a person who felt dizzy or sluggish. Anyone could do it—no supernatural validation was needed. Other women described quite casually how it was done and discussed the various times they had actually performed the operation. Coming Daylight, however, insisted that while there was really nothing to such an operation, she could never bring herself to perform it, nor would she allow anyone else to bleed her; she could not stand the sight of blood.

The aversion to the sight of blood and to self-mutilation was evidently deep-seated and showed itself in a marked manner early in her life. On one occasion a close relative was very ill. In such a situation it was expected that every member of the family would rally around and do whatever he could toward the recovery. Among the things that fell within the scope of activity for female relatives was that of vowing to sacrifice something valuable, including perhaps the blood from one's arm or a finger-joint, if the person recovered. At this particular time, Coming Daylight was a young child, and her grandmother decided that it would be appropriate for the little girl to offer that her finger-tip be removed if the relative regained his health. When it was suggested to her, Coming Daylight refused, even though her grandmother took after her with a stick. She actually ran away and wandered alone, until two nights later the relative died and an uncle finally found her.

On another occasion in her early youth, too, she defied a convention connected with kinship by refusing to join in mourning for an uncle who had been killed in revenge for having instigated the murder of his brother's wife. When her grandmother upbraided Coming Daylight for not expressing grief in the traditional manner, the latter defied her by saying: "I am not going to cry for that man. I don't know why you are crying for him. I have worked for that woman and she has fed me, and has even given me meat to bring home to you. I heard

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the shots and went later to see what happened, and there I saw her lying across the fire; her dress had burned off and her body was all shriveled. They weren't satisfied to kill her, but they burned her too!" She maintained her attitude and all the scolding from her relatives was of no avail.

Before turning to her adult life, we may refer to another instance which illustrates Coming Daylight's sensitivity to the suffering of others. In the Sacrifice Lodge, which is the Gros Ventre version of the well-known Plains Sun Dance, one of the important features was the spectacular self-torture which the active participants underwent. Each one had a sliver of wood embedded in the flesh of his chest. To the wood was tied a line, the other end of which was fastened high on the center-pole of the lodge. The man, leaning back so that the line was taut, went back and forth until finally the sliver was torn from his flesh. Meanwhile the women cheered on their relatives by "rattling their tongues," singing war songs, and the like, by way of encouraging the men to be brave and see the thing through. Coming Daylight was quite a young child when she first witnessed this performance. She remembered vividly her reaction when one of the young men, in his exhaustion, went to the center-pole and, putting his arms around it, wept aloud. She was not able to stand it any longer and rushed home crying. Her grandmother was very angry with her for leaving in the middle of the performance, but all the little girl could say was: "Oh, I just pitied that young man," and she could not be induced to return to the dance lodge. We may add here that actually in later years she did not participate in the Sacrifice Lodge even so far as women were allowed to do so.

The examples we have given are sufficient to show, I believe, that Coming Daylight had developed as a child a very strong set against violence, against painful and dangerous experiences. She refused medicine power from supernatural sources not only because it was dangerous but also because it involved a kind of physical activity which was repugnant to her. She refused to mutilate herself and was extremely sensitive to painful experiences in others. Her actual deviations from the patterns of accepted or approved behavior all tended in this same direction against violence. Her adult behavior likewise was consistent with this trend in her personality.

In consonance with her feeling against physical violence Coming Daylight avoided as far as possible the rough-and-tumble play in which brother-in-law and sister-in-law were free to, and indeed expected to, indulge. Other women told with glee how they enjoyed "getting even" with their brothers-in-law by, for instance, pushing them when fully clothed into the river, or dumping bucketfuls of water over their heads when they least expected it, and so on; but Coming Daylight admitted without hesitation that she didn't like that sort of thing and never attempted to retaliate even when her brothers-in-law succeeded in playing jokes on her. Similarly while it was not unusual for women rivals to actively fight over a man, she refrained from such undignified behavior, although it must be admitted that she had enough provocation on at least one occasion of which she told me. She had just married a man who was described by others as something of a gay Lothario. A woman who had been trying to force her attentions on him was furious when she heard of the marriage. She rushed to the lodge and pulled Coming Daylight out feet first, yelling insults the while. When the latter regained her feet she made no attempt to hit back even though the other slapped her and pulled off an earring, tearing the lobe of the ear. Coming Daylight, however, bided her time and soon was able to make an opportunity for an exchange of words with the woman at a big social dance.